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10 October 1957

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chiefs, FBIS Field Bureaus
FROM : Acting Chief, FBIS
SUBJECT : Letter of Instruction - Part I

GENERAL

1. Supplements to the Daily Report issued in September:

- a. 6 September -- World Radio and Press Reaction to Soviet Announcement on the Development of an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile.
- b. 16 September -- Theses of the Central Committee of the CPSU: "For the 40th Anniversary of the October Socialist Revolution, 1917-1957"
- c. 27 September -- World Radio and Press Reaction to Events in Little Rock, Arkansas.

2. Special and continuing support of the Radio Propaganda Branch from the field was reflected in a section in a regular publication based on the Austrian Bureau's roundup of Soviet-Satellite press treatment of the Tito-Gomulka talks; in a report on the Soviet draft legislation on "social parasites," incorporating special research done at the Austrian Bureau and material supplied by the Mediterranean Bureau; and in a study of Soviet and Hungarian propaganda treatment of Imre Nagy since the Hungarian rebellion, using material from the London, Mediterranean and Austrian bureaus.

3. In order to reduce the amount of ACAN circuit time being consumed by reruns, the following procedure is in effect for a trial period from 15 September to 15 December 1957: When garbled portions of a message consist of less than 10% of the overall message and are confined to not more than two lines per page, corrections will be obtained by sending a service message to the originating station requesting only the specific portions needed. As notification may not have filtered through all ACAN relays, bureaus not already so doing should implement this procedure immediately. While we do not expect time to be wasted in figuring percentages or counting words and lines of garbles, every effort should be made to estimate with reasonable care; bureaus will undoubtedly be charged with procedural discrepancies on all obvious violations occurring during the monitoring check period.

ACAN is also conducting during the same experimental period a new internal procedure in handling reruns which is designed to reduce the amount of circuit

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time consumed by reruns. The FBIS Field Operations Staff will welcome from all bureaus comment by 1 December on any noticeable effects in rerun service in connection with either of the above-mentioned procedural experiments.

EDITORIAL

1. General

a. The field's response to the new Editorial Handbook has been extremely gratifying. Virtually all of the bureaus adjusted quickly to the new criteria and the result has been a considerable reduction in the amount of pencil editing that has been necessary in Headquarters. Some of the more common deviations and problems are indicated below, but these should disappear as familiarity with the Handbook grows.

(1) Poor translations still cause the most considerable waste of time in preparing field copy for publication. Despite the difficulties presented by some languages, editors should always remember that the task of clarifying material should not be transferred to headquarters. The hazards of filing material of this nature are especially grave when important statements are involved, since most of these statements will need to be extensively edited before they are carried on the B-Wire. Subsequent editing in the Daily Report sections prior to publication could lead to a situation in which our consumers may be presented with two different versions. This hazard can best be eliminated in the field.

(2) Phrases or facts of doubtful logic or propriety sometimes carry the editorial phrase "as transmitted" or "as sent". The new Handbook provides that the proper notation in such cases is "as received" or "as heard", since it has been learned from experience that phrases apparently clearly heard may turn out to be something else upon closer scrutiny or when the item is repeated in a subsequent transmission.

(3) Attention is again drawn to procedures relating to attention slugs. Recent roundups of world reaction submitted in response to an Editorial Branch request were addressed in six different ways, although the Handbook specifically indicates that such roundups should be slugged PROJECTS EDITOR ONLY. Even in cases where other individuals have a priority interest, care should be exercised to file the roundups COPY TO PROJECTS EDITOR to insure his receiving at least one copy.

(4) Bracketed material in press agency items, which is merely a parenthetical remark related to the original item, should be enclosed in double hyphens and not identified specifically as an agency bracket. Clarifying phrases, however, in official documents, which are apparently not part of the formal statement, need to be identified as such.

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(5) There appears to be some confusion about methods of using numbers in lists. In the case of individual paragraphs the style continues to be as follows:

"The following areas of responsibility have been established for 1958:

"1--Metals will be provided by the Purchasing Commission;

"2--Labor resources will be developed with the cooperation of of the Ministry of Education."

When lists are included within a single paragraph, follow the Handbook's guidance:

"The following percentages represent fulfillment of quotas for 1957: 1) Food, 92 per cent; 2) Fuel, 101 per cent; 3) Clothing, 103 per cent, etc."

(6) Use of the designation "Ed:" in short, obviously editorial notes-- such as those marking indistinct words -- still prevails at some bureaus. Also there have been cases where interviews involving questions and answers have not followed the standard format as indicated in the Handbook.

(7) Some bureaus continue to use "(phonetic)" after a doubtful name despite the new procedure which calls for the insertion of a question mark between the doubtful name and the closed parenthesis with no following elaboration.

(8) The processing indicator "summary with quotations" has been replaced with the simple designation "summary". Important or critical phrases, however, which are reported textually within the body of a summary still need to be indicated as such.

(9) Attention is called to the compounding and hyphenation rules included in the 1953 GPO Style Manual. The present FBIS "down style" with respect to capitalization makes it unnecessary in this connection to hyphenate such words as antiparty, progovernment, and antirightist.

(10) Cues continue to be received without an indication as to the length of the item. To permit the Editorial Branch to plan effectively, it is essential that this information be available before the field is asked to process cued material.

(11) Several bureaus follow the old style of using figures in units of time under ten (6 hours, 8 days) in addition to supplying spelled-out versions when it is apparent that the Daily Report will use only the spelled-out form. Figures are not needed for confirmation in such cases.

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b. On two recent occasions the field was requested to furnish roundups of radio and press reaction on extremely short notice. The response was more than adequate. For the most part the reports were comprehensive and well written despite the great burden placed upon the bureaus. It is certainly the intention of Headquarters to provide the field with more than sufficient notice when the need for such roundups can be anticipated, and this practice will continue in the future. Occasionally, however, extraordinary demands make it necessary to produce reports with very little notice, and unfortunately the field assumes a large share of the additional burden. A few generalizations concerning the preparation and handling of these roundups appear to be appropriate:

(1) As indicated earlier, all roundups should be addressed either PROJECTS EDITOR ONLY or COPY TO PROJECTS EDITOR. Failure to do so creates sizeable problems.

(2) When reporting widely divergent reaction from various newspapers in a single country, the political complexion of the various journals should be given when this may serve to explain the divergency.

(3) For the most part valid generalizations are still more important than individual quotations, especially when the latter represents very minor opinion. Some writers still have a tendency to emphasize the atypical because it is more dramatic. The Mediterranean Bureau's recent lengthy breakdown concerning the broadcast time of individual items served no useful purpose.

c. The Okinawa Bureau's recent FYI which took issue with a statement in the review of Significant Foreign Radio Reportage made it possible to correct a prevailing misconception concerning the status of various discredited North Korean leaders. Bureaus are encouraged to scrutinize the wire-filed "Pink Sheet" carefully and to apprise headquarters of any radical disagreement with its contents.

d. Although there is general satisfaction with the manner in which economic abstracts are now being processed, several consumers have recently commented that there seems to have been a sharp drop in the volume of material they receive. Others have indicated that the quality of the editing has deteriorated. Editors are reminded that they now bear virtually sole responsibility for the quality of the abstracts. The editing must be more than cursory and a final scrutiny of the mats should assure them that the items are completely correct and in good form.

e. Several recent FYI's indicating that various transmissions of important documentary materials were identical were found to be in error upon close examination. Extreme caution should be used in making such statements and when made should be the result of thorough examination rather than an educated guess.

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f. On several recent occasions consumers have mistakenly assumed that a new organization or a new publication was being mentioned in a radio broadcast when actually a previously identified one was being mentioned but with a variant translation of its title. It is admittedly difficult to standardize rapidly the names of new organizations, publications, book titles, and so forth, when no standard English equivalent has been agreed on. In such cases it should be standard practice to give both the translation and the original rendering in brackets of all publications, book titles, etc., until such a standard translation exists. When, for example, a Soviet broadcast in French refers in that language to a publication originally published in Russian editors would do well to give the original Russian version if it is definitely known.

2. London Bureau

a. Editors are cautioned that three dots may not be used to indicate deletions within a sentence except as they represent an ellipsis originating with the news agency. The device of interposing three dots is permissible only in filing EXCERPTS when an entire sentence has been omitted during editorial processing.

b. The Daily Report uses the GPO Style Manual as an authority on the names of foreign currency. Thus it is Markke and not Finmark.

c. The abbreviation FRG should not be used to designate the Federal Republic of Germany. Initials are appropriate only in the case of the German Democratic Republic.

d. As indicated in a recent Letter of Instruction the relaxation governing the publication of voice and press materials relieves us of the necessity of restricting material from press transmissions, and press and voice briefs relating to a single subject may now be filed together.

e. There have been several recent instances where editors have failed to edit copy transmitted in English Hellschreiber. Cablese should not be retained in copy filed to headquarters.

3. West Coast Bureau

a. Editors are reminded that the original Portuguese or Spanish of all organizations, trade unions, etc., should be included in copy.

4. German Bureau

a. Material continues to be sent with improper flags and corrections have, in many cases, not been fully identified.

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5. Mediterranean Bureau

a. Insofar as possible the names of North African Arabs should be given according to the French spelling and not transliterated as is standard with Arabic names elsewhere.

b. More short, routine material from Middle East transmitters should be filed as briefs.



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